

Gas Companies Request More Authority for PUC

Southland natural gas distributing companies recently declared the state Public Utilities Commission needs more authority in its fight to protect the overall public interest of California residents.

The companies' spokesman stated, however, that they are opposed to well-head price regulation of California natural gas producers.

Instead, the gas companies proposed the PUC be given additional limited power to regulate construction of pipelines by non-public utilities for conveying natural gas to consumers.

This plan would not prohibit such pipelines, but would put them to the test of being in the overall public interest.

LOCAL POSITION

The position of the Southern California and Southern Counties Gas Companies and the Pacific Lighting Gas Supply Company was presented to the PUC as it began a general investigation of the state's natural gas industry.

Speaking for the gas companies, Attorney Milford Springer said:

"Legislation is required that would restore the integrity of certificates of public convenience and necessity granted by this commission to render gas service in specified areas of the state.

"This would do the job which producer price regulation would not do."

Springer's remarks were part of an opening statement before PUC Commissioner Peter E. Mitchell and Examiner William W. Dunlop at hearings in the new state building in Los Angeles.

Attacking the cause of high California field prices of gas, Springer put the blame on direct, non-judicial sales of gas by producers to large industrial consumers outside the regulatory authority of the PUC.

Springer explained that had regulation of producer prices to public utilities existed previously, it would have undoubtedly stimulated producers to seek additional unregulated sales to private customers.

"Prices which our companies pay to producers of California source gas are in excess of well head prices paid to producers of the gas we buy from sources outside California," Springer said.

The development which "activated sharp increases in the field price of gas in Southern California," Springer stated, "was the direct

purchase of a large volume of gas ultimately fixed at 500 billion cubic feet or about one-sixteenth of the state's total gas reserve by Southern California Edison Company from Richfield Oil Corporation together with widespread negotiations aimed at further purchases of this kind."

Edison purchased the gas for use in its steam electric generating plants.

"Prices offered by Edison for California source gas at that time were higher than prevailing prices, and approximated the price paid at the California border for out-of-state gas," Springer said.

Springer explained that "it was the efforts by a large consumer to acquire gas directly by private contract, rather than anything inherent in traditional negotiations between utilities and gas producers, that resulted in rapid increases in price."

In conclusion, Springer stated: "our best protection against additional sharp increases in wellhead prices stimulated by direct, non-regulated sales of California source gas proved to be the long term contracts into which our companies have entered progressively with California producers since development of the described situation.

"These provide the dual advantages of preserving California gas supplies to all of our customers over a long period, and of stabilizing gas prices near the border price level."

Faculty Members Discuss Subject Enrichment

Six El Camino faculty members spoke at Math-Science Keekend as 800 mathematics and science teachers from the southern California area gathered in Santa Monica during the past week to discuss their professions.

Howard Abram, chemistry instructor, gave several demonstrations on the unusual properties and uses of glass. He demonstrated, for instance, that it can be used to conduct electricity, a noteworthy fact inasmuch as glass is usually considered a non-conductor.

Mrs. Geraldine Karpel, physics teacher, gave "Some Comments on the Teaching of Special Relativity," and told how this subject can be introduced at a high school level.

Mark Jacobs spoke on integrating physics into a physical science course.

Julius Sumner Miller demonstrated his singing tubes and melopes in his talk on "Some Exciting Demonstrations in Physics."

Mrs. Margaret Lehman explained why a rolling ball which hits the hand in one spot stings while at another time it will not hurt in her talk on unusual and exciting problems in mechanics.

Both Mrs. Lehman and Miller presented demonstrations suitable for high school class presentations.

William T. Mooney, Jr., assistant director of instruction at the college, spoke on ideas for enriching the chemistry course.

Mrs. Lehman, ECC representative on the program and planning committee, pointed out that the meeting provided one of the few occasions when math and science teachers from all grade levels could assemble together for the discussion of mutual problems.

Some of the subjects discussed by speakers from other schools were nuclear energy in the elementary school, the fossil history of man, simple machines and sound, new ideas in science toys for elementary schools, and the preparation of your scientists for college.

Mrs. Lehman, immediate past president of the American Association of Southern California, also addressed the general session in the introductory portion of the program.

PLEASE EVERYBODY
Trying to please everybody is like a pup trying to follow four boys going in four directions.



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